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ABSTRACT

This article tells the story of a group of teachers who experienced change in the face of a newly formed professional development school--one that loosely implemented many of the principles associated with the Holmes Group model. Specifically, these teachers became active participants on the Steering Committee, a group formed within the context of the school district/university collaborative partnership. In presenting accounts of the early processes of instituting change, the focus is on three individuals, as the "why?" and "how?" of professional development are explored. Why did these teachers choose to become active members of the school steering committee? What motivated them to think about change and its potential? How has involvement in professional development activities changed their perceptions of themselves as educators? How has it altered their sense of voice and efficacy in the junior high school where they work? This article, therefore, explores elements of both personal experience and group dynamics within the professional development school. The initiative for the formation of this professional development school came from teachers who were dissatisfied with the environment of their school and who wanted a vehicle for improving the school and their own professional lives. (Contains 20 references.) (Author/IAH)

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INITIATING CHANGE THROUGH A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL: THREE TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES

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An earlier, much shorter, version of this paper was presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta, April, 1993.

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Abstract

This article tells the story of a group of teachers who experienced change in the context of a newly formed professional development school—one that loosely implemented many of the principles associated with the Homes Group model. Specifically, these teachers became active participants on the Steering Committee, a group formed within the context of the school district/university collaborative partnership. In presenting accounts of the early processes of instituting change, we focus on three individuals, as we explore the "why?" and "how?" of professional development. Why did these teachers choose to become active members of the School Steering Committee? What motivated them to think about change and its potential? How has involvement in professional development activities changed their perceptions of themselves as educators? How has it altered their sense of voice and efficacy in the junior high school where they work? This article, therefore, explores elements of both personal experience and group dynamics within the professional development school.

INITIATING CHANGE THROUGH A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOOL: THREE TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES

In 1990, The Holmes Group published its second report, Tomorrow's Schools, which provided a rationale for the concept of Professional Development Schools. As described by that report, such schools would be a unique collaboration between schools and colleges of education that would function "for the development of novice professionals, for continuing development of experienced professionals, and for the research and development of the teaching profession" (p. 1), thus creating a context for collaboration between school and university faculty members. Prior to the publication of this report, many calls were made for the professionalization of teachers within a similar collaborative context (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 1984, 1988; Devaney & Sykes, 1988; Lieberman, 1988) with the active participation of teachers being seen as a key element in its potential success. As Devaney and Sykes observe,

> . . . developing a work culture that is professional must be done in partnership with the workers themselves—teachers. Professionalism is a form of liberty that is not simply conferred; it is earned. Teachers must not only be enabled; they must be convinced that tasks in their work can be accomplished only under professional standards, norms, and conditions. Then teachers themselves must set about achieving these (p. 4).

Developing such a "professional culture" also calls for a restructuring of teacher roles and relationships in which change is central (Judge, 1988).

In examining school change as it occurred over time in one district, Smith and his colleagues drew a distinction between educational innovation and educational change (Smith, Dwyer, Prunty, & Kleine, 1988). They saw educational innovation as "just one class of phenomena in the larger category of educational change" (1988, p. 18). Their focus, however, was on the larger district-wide changes and innovations which occurred in a specific context—a focus which we

believe to be a truly valuable one, and one which we might have chosen to take in our study. But we chose instead to look at change and innovation as they occur at a personal level in the lives of teachers. As Smith et al. (1988) and others have suggested, professionalism and professional development can only truly occur when teachers themselves become actively involved in the process, and in such a context the individual, personal, and teacher-level "why?" and "how?" of these occurrences become important questions. Thus, it was against this backdrop of restructuring and reform that we set out to explore the lives of a group of teachers who chose to actively participate in building a collaborative context for professional development in a medium-sized junior high school—Baldwin Junior High[1] — within a small school district with limited resources.

This article tells the story of a small group of teachers who experienced change in the context of a newly formed professional development school—one that loosely implemented many of the principles associated with the Homes Group (1990) model. Specifically, these teachers became active participants on the Professional Development School Steering Committee, a group formed within the context of the school district-university collaborative partnership. In presenting an account of the early processes of instituting change, we focus on three individuals, as we explore the "why?" and "how?" of professional development. Why did these teachers choose to become active members of the Baldwin Junior High School/Piedmont University Professional Development School Steering Committee? What motivated them to think about change and its potential? How has involvement in professional development activities changed their perceptions of themselves as educators? How has it altered their sense of voice and efficacy in the

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[1] Throughout this paper, in order to maintain the confidentiality of the those involved, we have disguised the teachers, the schools, and the community involved in the Baldwin/Piedmont Professional Development School partnership. Thus, all place, institution, and personnel names are psuedonyms.

junior high school where they work? These are the questions that motivated our thinking. Like Gehrke and Romerdahl (1992) we were interested in understanding the experiences of those teachers who took on leadership roles, and like Pugach and Pasch (1992) we wanted to understand some of the dynamics that played out in the formation of the professional development school activities. This article, therefore, explores elements of both personal experience and group dynamics within the professional development school.

Exploring the Context of Personal Change

Based on a case study approach (Yin, 1984; Merriam, 1988), we collected and analyzed data according to principles of ethnographic research (e.g., Spradley, 1979, 1980; Woods, 1986), drawing also from the work of Denzin (1991) and Cole (1991) with regard to life history explorations. Our primary data gathering methods were similar to some other studies of professional development school sites (e.g., Sagmiller & Gehrke, 1992; Fear, 1991) and included participant observations of Steering Committee meetings, semi-structured interviews with the individual teachers, and written documentation associated with the work of the Committee. The meetings of the Steering Committee occurred monthly, and all interviews were audio-taped and transcribed for later analysis. Early interviews focused on elements of the life and career histories of the three teachers, while later ones addressed issues of change and professional development in the context of the school-wide restructuring and the formation of the Baldwin/Piedmont Professional Development School (PDS). We also interviewed other teachers on the Steering Committee and used their comments to corroborate and sometimes supplement the stories told by the three focal teachers.

The Making of a Professional Development School

With an enrollment of slightly more than 500 students and a staff of 38, Baldwin Junior High School serves seventh through ninth grade pupils in Benson Valley, an economically-depressed, racially-mixed community near a large metropolitan area. Although the Benson Valley School District is relatively small, with only two high schools and eight elementary schools in addition to one other

junior high school, it is faced with many problems that are more typical of large, urban, multicultural school settings. Low attendance, high rates of drug abuse, single parent homes, teenage pregnancy, and poverty are present, and nearly one-sixth of the students at Baldwin are in Special Education classes. In addition, the community's economy, which is highly dependent upon appliance manufacturing and assembly plants, floundered during the 1990-92 recession, and unemployment figures in Benson Valley are high.

A School in Crisis

As it entered into the partnership with Piedmont University, Baldwin Junior High School was in many ways a school in crisis. Not only was it faced with increasing shortages in materials and supplies due to the poor economic conditions of the community at large, but because of the staff's strong dissatisfaction with the building's administration, Baldwin was generally regarded among teachers in the school district as the least desirable building to work in. One of the teachers described the school's atmosphere as follows:

> Everyone was <u>really</u> pessimistic. No one ever smiled. It was just not a nice place to be, and I didn't like being there. You would go in there and you'd get this feeling like, "Is anybody in this school happy?" You would say "good morning" to people, and they would just turn their head or look at you as if to say, "What's wrong with you? You're smiling in the morning. Don't you know that you're not supposed to smile in this school?" I mean, it was really horrible.

An Unpopular Principal

The principal at Baldwin, a woman named Gayle, was very unpopular among many of the staff, and virtually every teacher with whom we spoke attributed the school's negative atmosphere and poor reputation largely to her unpleasant personality and autocratic style of management. "The woman was vindictive," said one teacher rather bluntly, "Probably the most lying and vindictive person you'd ever meet." Other descriptions were more diplomatic but no less

negative. "Unfortunately, there was a lot of mistrust between Gayle and the rest of the staff," said another teacher, "and this sowed seeds of dissention between teachers." Continuing, he stated:

> Some people got along with her better than others, and they were ostracized by the rest of the staff. Teachers just didn't like it when other teachers were close to her because it usually resulted in preferential treatment. Teachers who were her friends got favored treatment, while those who were her enemies got punished.

According to other accounts, this "punishment" was often meted out to teachers for actions as innocuous as openly disagreeing with Gayle at a staff meeting, and it ranged from the placement of disruptive students in their classrooms, to the arbitrary changing of their schedules to include subjects they did not want to teach, to the placement of defamatory evaluations in their personnel files. One veteran teacher even told of being involuntarily transferred to one of the high schools following a dispute with Gayle. She stated:

> Probably the biggest turning point in my career was when Gayle had me transferred to one of the high schools. Up until that point, I had always tried to accommodate her because I figured she could do me serious damage. But when she transferred me, I finally realized, "There's nothing more she can do to me. That's the worst she can do." Eventually, I filed a grievance through the teacher's union, which cost me about $1500 out of my own pocket, but I won. I got my old job back after a year.

Unfortunately, Gayle declined to be interviewed,[2] and we are therefore unable to balance such stories with her perspective. However, throughout all of our interviews with the teachers, the same kinds of negative stories were echoed again and again to such an extent that we could not help but conclude that there were

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[2] For reasons that will become clear later in the paper, Gayle was no longer associated with the school when we requested an interview, and she declined to be interviewed, stating that she felt such a discussion would no longer be relevant.

serious problems in the relationship between the principal and the staff at Baldwin. To the teachers, Gayle seemed to epitomize everything that was wrong with the school, and whether or not the reasons for this was well-grounded, it was commonplace..

No Hope For Change

Several teachers stated that for years they had attempted to make the circumstances at Baldwin known to the Superintendent and members of the School Board, but according to their accounts, Gayle had consistently discredited the staff to such an extent throughout the years that their complaints were routinely ignored at the Central Office. The teachers desperately wanted a new principal, but Gayle had remained in her position for almost thirteen years, and until Baldwin entered into the partnership with Piedmont University, they had little reason to expect a change. "We just seemed to think that there was not ever going to be any change," said one teacher. "We felt that we were just always going to be unhappy and that it was simply always going to be that way and everybody should just accept it." Another teacher even went so far as to compare the situation at Baldwin to a concentration camp. "I felt this analogy for a number of years," she said.

> Our situation was very much like it was for people who were in slavery or in the Holocaust. What I mean is that whenever people are under tremendous stress and it is unending and they have no power in the situation, they react in very predictable kinds of ways. When people feel totally powerless to change their environment, they turn on each other, and we had a lot of turning on each other, just like prisoners of war. Because we had no way to fight the power, we got into camps of opposition—and there was just no way to change it. . . . She had been there for thirteen years, and year after year, it was always exactly the same.

A Teacher-initiated Project

Given the circumstances at Baldwin Junior High School, it is not surprising that the Professional Development School was initiated entirely by the staff. One of the teachers had learned that Piedmont University was seeking a partnership with a junior high school, and she wrote a letter to Piedmont's Dean of Education, suggesting that Baldwin would be a good site. The letter stated in part:

> Our district is always very interested in attempting new techniques and curriculum innovations to improve the education of our student body. . . It is my understanding that you might be especially interested in schools with a sizable proportion of high risk students. I believe that our school will be a good candidate in terms of our student population and in our willingness to try new programs and procedures.

Although no mention was made of the internal strife and dissention that existed between the staff and the principal, many teachers later stated that they viewed the Professional Development School not only as a way to secure large amounts of money and resources for their financially strapped school, but also as a potential way to bring their administration problems to light—in essence, as a way to place their school under public scrutiny so that their complaints to the Central Office would have to be taken seriously. As one teacher put it, "You can't have a Professional Development School and have a bad principal." The administrative faculty of Piedmont University were initially unaware of this aspect of the teachers' motivation, as were the personnel who became involved in the school, although at least one university person suspected that ulterior motives were involved.

However, it is important to stress that the action taken by the teachers was by no means a premeditated conspiracy designed to oust Gayle from her position as principal. Although they certainly viewed the hiring of a new principal as a highly favorable outcome that might indeed be fostered by the Professional Development School, they did not enter into the partnership with an articulated plan to use the

newly formed institutional partnership as a way to replace Gayle. Instead, on a more global scale, the teachers were simply looking for a way to improve their professional lives and to improve their school. In the words of one teacher, they were searching for answers to the questions that plagued them each day as they taught—questions such as, "Why can't things be different? Why do they have to be like this? Why do people have to be so unhappy? Why do the students not achieve like they should? Why can't we make this building run better? Why. . . ?"

When the opportunity arose, a few the teachers saw the partnership with Piedmont University as a potential way to address these concerns, and since the benefits also included access to abundant fiscal resources, loaned hardware for computer labs, technical assistance, and access to university faculty,[3] the establishment of the PDS was strongly supported by the Superintendent and the Board of Education. At meetings held between the university and the school district the rhetoric was such that it was not clear where the principal of Baldwin stood in her thinking about the proposed partnership. She appeared to neither actively oppose nor support the notion but instead remained somewhat aloof from the discussions. Nevertheless, with a high level of support from the administrators of the school district, it was not long before an agreement was reached with Piedmont.

The Formation of a Steering Committee

After the partnership was established, one of the first actions taken was the formation of the Steering Committee. There had been other staff-based committees in the past, but according to one of the teachers, they had always been dominated by Gayle to the extent that they were not functional. "And it wasn't always the fault of the committee people," said the teacher.

> A lot of times, the principal just decided that she wanted different people on them, which wasn't exactly the way they were supposed to

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[3] At the beginning it was probably not apparent that all of these kinds of resources would be available. What was known was that the university was prepared to make substantial investments in the project.

run. So after a while, no one wanted to be on them because they didn't do anything. It was just a waste of time.

But the PDS Steering Committee was different. It consisted not only of eight teachers and the principal, but it also had several outsiders, including one of the assistant superintendents of the Benson Valley School District and four faculty/staff members from Piedmont University. Working together, this group began to chart a course for the school by establishing goals[4] and creating various subcommittees to address these goals—and within each committee, everyone had an equal voice.

The First Change: A Six-Period Day

One of the first subcommittees formed was the Restructuring Committee. Many of the teachers at Baldwin claimed that for several years, they had wanted to add an extra period to their existing five-period day. This would entail shortening each period by ten minutes—from sixty minutes to fifty minutes—thus creating enough time to allow for the extra period. They reasoned that the new six-period day would not only enhance the students' education by providing an extra elective class, but it would also help them as teachers by providing an extra planning period. Virtually all of the teachers agreed that the six-period day was an excellent idea, but no one had ever seriously considered implementing it until the formation of the Professional Development School seemed to place the idea into the realm of possibility.

The first year was particularly fuzzy in focus as the committee did a grat deal of "messing about coming to some understandings about the formal problems of the school." Almost within a year of the partnership being formed, and after a great deal of exploration, the six-period day was finally brought to fruition through

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4 The Steering Committee initially established the following broad goals for Baldwin Junior High School:

- To provide increased opportunities for students' self-development.
- To improve the opportunities for faculty and staff development.
- To improve the quality of students' learning and teachers' teaching through developing improved curriculum and improved instruction.
- To explore ways to modify the structural constraints placed on the quality of teachers' teaching and students' learning.

the work of those on the Restructuring Committee, and the negative attitude that had permeated Baldwin gradually began to change. One of the teachers who served on the Restructuring Committee told how this accomplishment uplifted the moral of her colleagues and showed them that change was possible:

> The first thing we wanted to do was to restructure our day, and a lot of teachers were saying, "I don't know why you're trying to change things. They're never going to let that happen." But all the time we were working on our proposal, you could gradually feel a change in the atmosphere. Even though a few people were still saying negative things, it was almost as if there was a growing hope that things might change. Then we got more and more people saying, "Yeah, I'm going to work on that. I think we can change it. Maybe it will happen." And then school started—and the school board approved our proposal—and in September we actually started the six-period day. That really got the rest of the teachers into the idea that change was possible, and we began to get people involved in the Professional Development School who had never thought that things were ever going to change—people who never thought that they would ever be happy teaching again.

More than anything, this singular event brought about a more general realization by the staff that, indeed, the Steering Committee was influential and could facilitate substantial changes within the school. In this way the momentum and power of the Committee's work was magnified.

A Change in Leadership

Throughout her involvement with the Steering Committee, Gayle's authoritative style of management also gradually began to change, and according to one of the faculty members at Piedmont University, she seemed to be genuinely committed to improving her relationship with the teachers. Ultimately, however, she was unable to overcome the history of bad feelings that had developed at Baldwin over the previous 13 years, and her position as principal became more and more tenuous. "It eventually got to the point where she knew—and everybody

knew—that she was either going to retire or that she was going to be fired," said one of the teachers. "And in fact, she took an early retirement."

Thus, through the Professional Development School, the teachers were able to gain control of a situation which they saw as being very negative, and they were able to bring about what they saw as a positive change in their lives. Following Gayle's departure, a new principal was hired with extensive input from the staff, and he assumed his duties as the PDS partnership began its third year. We have briefly laid out some of the thinking of the teachers, as well as the general progression of events at the school, as a prelude to telling about the experiences of some of the teachers.

Three Teachers' Experiences

As we learned more and more about the events that precipitated the establishment of the Professional Development School, we became increasingly interested in understanding how this event, and the processes that went with it, had impacted the lives and careers of individual teachers. Therefore, we decided to focus on three veteran teachers, a woman and two men, and explore how they had personally experienced change. They were all veteran teachers with 15 to 20 years of experience, and they had all been associated with the Steering Committee for approximately two and a half years. They were selected primarily because of their active involvement on the Steering Committee and their apparent commitment to professional development.

Jennifer

Jennifer was a 38-year-old Science, Math, and Social Studies teacher with 17 years of experience—eight at an elementary school and nine at Baldwin Junior High School. Somewhat shy and reticent, she had a soft voice which nevertheless exuded enthusiasm. "I love teaching," she said with a smile. "I always have, and I think it shows in my classroom. My students know that I love to teach." Jennifer further described her classroom as a place where it was "okay for children to ask questions or make mistakes" and a place where both children and parents felt welcome.

In describing her role at Baldwin, Jennifer said that she saw herself as a leader but not the "head leader". "I like to get involved and try to affect change or solve problems, but I prefer not to be the initial head person," she said. "I will if necessary but I prefer not to. . . I don't like conflict." Nevertheless, in addition to serving on the Steering Committee and several sub-committees, she held the position of Seventh Grade Department Chair and was one of Baldwin's union representatives.

Jennifer's motivation for becoming a member of the Steering Committee was closely connected to her deep dissatisfaction with the negative atmosphere at Baldwin and her desire to see it change. "I guess my initial reason for being on the Steering Committee was to be involved and to be informed, and I thought that the partnership would be a way to improve the school environment for the students and for myself." After two years of involvement on the Steering Committee, Jennifer was very happy with the changes that had occurred at Baldwin, both in the lives of her colleagues and in the lives of her students.

> Over the years, I've seen a lot of changes, but since we've been involved with the Professional Development School, I've seen enthusiasm out of people who had never been enthusiastic before. I mean people were actually smiling and wanting to stay after school because of the PDS. It's a rejuvenation for some of the teachers and for our school. And for the children, I think it's been motivational and made school more interesting to them. They've been exposed to new ways of learning that have really capture their interest.

But perhaps the most profound change which Jennifer experienced was a tremendous boost to her own self-esteem as a teacher. "Before I got involved with the Professional Development School, I always felt that no one really cared what teachers thought, that no one ever listened to us," she said. "But when I got involved with the PDS, the first time I felt that someone really cared was during the first year." With a broad smile on her face and a visible sense of awe reflected in her eyes, almost as if she still could not believe the transformation that had taken place, she continued her story:

> Two teachers went with a couple of the university staff to a Holmes Group meeting, and I was one of those teachers. Once we got there, I was surprised—absolutely shocked—that all of these deans and professors were asking us questions and really valuing our opinions. I thought, "Wow! They really want to hear what we think". . . I really felt like a professional because they were saying things like, "You're the real teacher." And I thought, "Whoa, you know, usually teachers don't get that." . . . Since then, I think my opinion of my teaching has really been elevated. I considered myself a good teacher before, but now I think other people are appreciative of more of the things that I'm doing.

Larry

Larry was a 45-year-old Special Education teacher with 23 years of experience, all in the Benson Valley School District. Dressed in a tie and sports coat, he projected a commanding presence, yet he was also quick to smile, and in conversation, his voice was usually animated and often punctuated by laughter. "I like to have fun in the classroom. I like to joke," he said, "But I also like to be rather structured because I feel my kids function better that way."

Early in his career, Larry was heavily involved in extracurricular activities, serving for several years as the Head Boys' Basketball and Track Coach at one of the high schools and the Head Football Coach at Baldwin, as well as being a building representative for the teacher's union. At the time of our interviews, however, he stated that he no longer committed himself to such after-school activities, having stopped in order to spend more time with his family.

> My wife and I made a deal. She knows that when I get into coaching I go one hundred percent, and she was really into our state teacher's union—she was vice-president of a couple of state committees. For a long time there, we hardly saw each other, so we both just decided to stop and spend more time together.

Larry considered himself to be on the "downside" of his career with just seven more years until retirement, and he readily admitted that he no longer had

the energy that he did in the past. "Teaching is a wonderful profession," he said, "in that you do it for nine months, you're off for the summer, and you're your own boss. . . Once you close the door, you're the big cheese—the boss. I like teaching."

In describing his motivation for serving on the Steering Committee, Larry stated:

> With Piedmont University and Baldwin working together, it just looked like something that was going to be good for the school—something that was going to move us in the right directions and I just wanted to be a part of it since I was already part of Benson Valley.

Expressing a great deal of satisfaction with this decision, he continued:

> I've served on committees before, but I haven't served on a committee that seems like it has the ability, power, and desire to cause change as much as this committee. Sometimes, you get on a committee with people who want to change, but they have no real power with which to do it, but now, whenever, I go to a meeting, things get accomplished.

In spite of this enthusiasm, Larry also maintained a certain amount of cynicism. "If Piedmont University were not involved in this committee," he said, "change would not take place, okay? I know that's a terrible view, but I say it because I've served on so many committees in the past."

Throughout our interviews, it became apparent that Larry seemed to have learned how to successfully negotiate the volatile political climate at Baldwin, and with retirement as his primary professional goal, he sometimes gave the impression that he probably would have been quite content with his circumstances as a teacher even if the Professional Development School had not been established—almost as if he were somewhat overwhelmed by the amount of work that it required. "There's so much to do," he said.

> And how do they say it? What's the saying? "The fields are full, but there's few workers." We've got so many committees and stuff to be on, and time is so tight, I feel sometimes I have to say, "I can't be on this committee," or "I have to step back from this activity" because there are so many.

However, he did recognize that the Professional Development School has had a positive impact on his teaching. "Right now," he said, "I want my class to be the best class it can be."

> I want to try a lot of different things. I want to do these different classes with collaborative teaching and all these different things. Variety is the spice of life, and hey, I need some change. I need some change personally, and the Professional Development School has kind of pushed me a little bit.

Steve

Steve was a 35-year-old Science teacher with 14 years of teaching experience in the Benson Valley School District, and he began teaching at Baldwin in the same year that it first became a Professional Development School. An athlete in college, he spent the first 11 years of his career as a Physical Education teacher at Benson Valley High School, a position which he ultimately found to be extremely unrewarding. "A high priced baby-sitter was all I was," he said. "A very high-priced, high-paid, professional baby-sitter."

> You see, the high school P.E. classes are a dumping ground for students. You can have up to 70 kids in one class, and although they pay you extra for it, it's still like a zoo. . . And I might add that during the nine years that I was a Physical Education teacher, I was evaluated only once.

As a high school teacher, Steve also resented the way he felt he was perceived by his colleagues, namely, as a "jock"—strong on discipline but without any real knowledge in a content area—so he voluntarily transferred to Baldwin Junior High School. Because he had a strong background in Math and had previously helped to write the district-wide Math curriculum, he was immediately able to assume the role of chair of the Math Department, a position which he still held at the time of our interviews. "During the last three years," he said, "I've been very satisfied with my career. I've moved towards what I feel is a very good-looking resume, but before that, I was really only a professional baby-sitter."

Steve stated that when her arrived at Baldwin, he was dissatisfied with the status quo—especially the apparent lack of consistently enforced discipline policies—and he joined the Steering Committee in order to become part of something that would change the school atmosphere. "Before the Professional Development School, I was a teacher who was doing a good job," he stated, "but I could have done better." He continued:

> Unfortunately, I was never given the opportunity to express myself or say what I felt should be done with the educational process. But with the Professional Development School, I can go into one of those meetings with the people from Piedmont University and immediately have a sense of personal worth because it's an objective environment. I know that what I say will be listened to and valued. . . What the Professional Development School has really done is that it's given us the word that everyone seems to be using now, "teacher empowerment," and because you're empowered, you feel more important and you work harder and you put in more time than you normally would. I mean I've put in more additional time for the Professional Development School than I ever did before, even when I was coaching.

For Steve, the Professional Development School was also an inspiration for writing a report on how to improve the school discipline policies at Baldwin, even though he doubted if any of the district administrators would actually read it.

> I think it will be valued by myself, though. And even if nothing gets changed as a result, I'll know that I tried. And that's probably the biggest thing. If it causes just one person down at the Central Office just to think for a minute, "Well, maybe we <u>should</u> try this. Maybe the teachers do know something. Maybe they're not just sitting in the classroom taking up space and getting paychecks," then it's worth it.

Learning from the Partnership Experience

By inviting collaboration with Piedmont University, the teachers at Baldwin Junior High School not only greatly enhanced their school's resources but they also increased the power of their personal and collective decision-making. Through the university, they obtained computer hardware and software for science laboratories, a new teachers' workroom/professional development library, resources for conference travel and participation, access to university professors, access to various student and service groups from within the university, and access to university facilities at large. In the process of gaining these substantial physical and fiscal resources, the teachers at Baldwin, in tandem with the general workings of the Steering Committee, also significantly increased their own sense of power, self-efficacy, and professionalism. Although not all of the teachers shared the relatively positive views of Jennifer, Larry, and Steve, these changes were generally evident in the teachers' demeanors as well as in their shared enthusiasm for the new directions that the school seemed to be heading as a result of the partnership.

In addition to enhancing Baldwin's fiscal and physical resources, the creation of the Professional Development School also served to place on public display all of the problems and tensions that the teachers had talked about for years, and it was under this public scrutiny that the district administration and the principal eventually made important decisions about the leadership of the school. When educators beyond the confines of the school district witnessed the internal conflict and dissention that dominated the interpersonal relations between the teachers and the principal, they became a powerful catalyst for change. Ultimately, it was the university personnel's critical analyses of the Baldwin Middle School context, occurring in concert with the increasingly solidified voice of the Steering Committee, which led the principal to take an early retirement.

As Pugach and Pasch (1992) note, there are invariable tensions within the formation and maintenance of professional development schools. The Baldwin story witnesses some of these tensions and suggests two important implications for thinking about professional development and teachers' motivations for change. First, university personnel or policy makers who work with teachers in facilitating change should be aware that underlying agendas for participation may be present in the midst of their efforts. And, they should not expect such underlying agendas to be superficial or easily accessed. The nature of schools and the intensely personal nature of teacher-to-teacher and administrator-to-teacher interactions are often very difficult for relative outsiders to figure out. In the account of another PDS partnership Pugach and Pasch (1992) also acknowledge the power of personal and collective agenda of teacher-leaders, who play central roles in the professional development school. In the case of Baldwin, even the experienced university personnel, which included former public school teachers and administrators, did not become fully aware are the underlying agenda at Baldwin until quite some time after the relationship had been established. Although the Baldwin Junior High/ Piedmont University Professional Development School was successful in its initial activities and continues to be successful today, the partnership between Baldwin Junior High and Piedmont University was initiated in the context of an intense and long-standing conflict between the teachers and the principal, and such an underlying context had the potential to seriously undermine the partnership and waste the fiscal and human resources that the university had committed to the project.

Second, when initiating or stimulating the context for change, it is important for local school administrators or university personnel to consider the personal agenda of individual teachers. In the context of institutional restructuring, change is often viewed as a fixed and quantifiable entity—something to be shared with

teachers and other school staff, perhaps even to be imparted to them. At the personal level of individual teachers, however, change may be expected and experienced in a variety of ways. Although each of the three teachers upon whom we focused expressed a similar motivation for becoming involved with the PDS Steering Committee—namely, to become a part of something that would improve the school—the ways in which they experienced this change varied. For example, for Jennifer, it resulted in an increased sense of professionalism and self-efficacy as a teacher, while for Steve, it led to a renewed hope that his voice as a teacher would perhaps be heard by the Central Office administrators, especially in regard to discipline policies. Finally, for Larry, who seemed to be somewhat overwhelmed by its impact, the change resulted in an increased motivation to try new things in his classroom.

Together, these are impressive stories, in that they witness teachers coming to grips with perplexing school issues in new ways or with new enthusiasm—a position not unlike that portrayed by Pugach and Pasch (1992), Rushcamp and Roehler (1992), and even Woloszk (1992). These stories also evidence a brutal reality: school-university partnerships are likely to suffer from instances of very personal conflicts and hurt that exist within schools and teacher groups unless these issues are brought to the fore. How to do that is another matter, however. In the case of Baldwin, it seemed to have only been a matter of time, although the Baldwin/Piedmont partnership could easily have resulted in another of the many less than satisfying university/school relationships that we informally hear about from teachers and university-based researchers but that we seldom read about in the published literature.

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